615 Cinna Kunnu:r (on the northern edge of the Nilgiris). Traditionally these were the Wodeas of Maduve clan, who had previously been *Jangama* priests. When other Wodeas arrived from Tagadu:r they formed a separate clan called Ko:ve:ru, as they were of that sept. Yet other Wodeas came to the Nilgiris from a monastery at Saragu:r, and since that was a village in the former Hindu kingdom of Kongu this particular clan of Wodeas have ever since been nicknamed Kongaru ('Kongu people') by other Badagas. Later on, when Tippu's troops seized the Nilgiri fortress of Male Ko:te, an Ummattu:r outpost, the Wodeas who were dependent on its chiefs were reportedly left destitute, but they remained in the hills.[14]

174 199 The relative recency of this Wodea migration derives some support from Badagu dialectology. As I have mentioned, there are six dialects of the language, three of these seemingly distinctive by reason of geography: speakers living in the Kundena:du, Ha:sanu:ru and Wainad areas used to be quite isolated from the rest of the community, a situation that would encourage the growth of separate dialects in the course of several centuries. The distinction of Wodea and of Kumba:ra-Be:da from Standard Badagu cannot, however, be explained in geographic terms, for the Wodeas, Kumba:ras and Be:das live in and beside villages where Standard Badagu is spoken. Only by postulating that these three groups arrived speaking a more modern form of Kannada than the earlier immigrants who spoke a medieval variety can we account 615 for this disparity. Their own legend fully bears out this hypothesis: they claim to have all come to the hills together in the service of an Ummattu:r chieftain when the Gaudas had already arrived, the Wodeas as Lingayat priests, the Kumba:ras as palace servants, the Be:das as huntsmen and tribute collectors. Not only do the Wodeas claim descent from the royal house, however (Metz, 1864, 48-49; Grigg, 1880, 220; Natesa Sastri, 1892, 754-755); the Kumba:ras also maintain they 'belonged to' the ruling family of Chamaraj Wodeya, though they probably had a servile rather than a kin relationship, particularly as this phratry is Shaivite (not Lingayat), while the royal family has been Vaishnavite since 1610. 197 198 The fact that the Wodeas have a dialect distinct from Kumba:ra-Be:da is to be explained by class distinctions. As in many parts of India the orthodox, vegetarian, high-status Woderu priests spoke differently from the low status, meat-eating servants of the chieftain for the two did not intermarry or mix socially.